

REMARKS

The Examiner's detailed study of the application as filed is greatly appreciated. The specification has been amended to correct terminology used on page 1. Claim 2 has been amended to correct informalities. Claims 15-18 have been amended to correct obvious misspellings. Applicants respectfully submit that the use of "slash molding" instead of "slush molding" is an obvious misspelling which is understood by one skilled in the relevant art.

Regarding the merits of the claimed invention, the characteristic controlling the invention lies a combination of an acrylic type block copolymer (A) containing an acid anhydride and/or a carboxylic group with an acrylic type polymer (B) containing an epoxy group in its molecule, as clearly specified in Claims. The component (B) acts as a plasticizer to improve molding flowability at molding the composition and, at the same time, the acid anhydride and/or the carboxylic group are reacted with the epoxy group to convert the acrylic block copolymer (A) to having a high molecular weight by cross-linking so that a composition having excellent heat resistance, etc. can be obtained (see page 7 lines 21-24, page 36 lines 5-14). The object of the present invention is to provide an acrylic block copolymer composition which is excellent in moldability, heat resistance, weather resistance, chemical resistance, adhesivity, flexibility and abrasion resistance (see page 7 lines 4-10).

Claims 1-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Goetz et al. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of that rejection for the following reasons.

The Goetz et al reference relates to a thermosetting coating composition comprising:

- (a) a first reactant having functional groups:
- (b) a second reactant having functional groups ---coreactive with the functional groups of said first reactant; and
- (c) a block copolymer flow control additive comprising
 - (i) a first block comprising -----(meth) acrylate monomer; and]

- (ii) a second block comprising residues of a second radically polymerizable ethylenically unsaturated monomer -----free of hydroxyl groups and amine groups ----- (claim 1).

As one of the examples of the first reactant, epoxy functional polymer (acryl type polymer containing an epoxy group) is enumerated, and as one of the examples of the second reactant, an epoxy functional crosslinking agent, such as a carboxyl functional crosslinking agent is enumerated. This means that the acryl type polymer containing an epoxy group (the first reactant) is reacted with the second crosslinking agent by a reaction between the epoxy group in the first reactant and the carboxyl group in the second crosslinking agent.

From the foregoing, it can be clearly understood that (1) the essential ingredients constituting the composition and (2) reaction mechanism are completely different between the present invention and Goetz's invention (3) as a result of which the object of the present invention "improvement of molding flowability at molding and improved heat resistance by making the acryl type block copolymer into high molecular weight and crosslinking" cannot be attained by the Goetz's invention. At least, there is found no disclosure nor suggestion on the above result.

Claims 1-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Kakeda^{*} in view of Goetz and either of Nakashiwa et al. or Kawakubo et al. Applicants respond to that rejection as seen in the following paragraph.

Kaneda's invention relates to a thermoplastic resin composition having improved impact resistance. There is enumerated, as one of various embodiments, a combination of an acryl type block copolymer having a carboxylic group or an acid anhydride group with an epoxy group containing copolymer. However, there is found no specific disclosure, nor suggestion, of the characteristic feature of the present invention, "the acrylic type copolymer having an epoxy groups acts as a plasticizer to improve molding flowability at molding the composition and at the same time the acid anhydride and/or the carboxylic group contained in the acrylic type copolymer are reacted with the epoxy group to convert the acrylic block copolymer (A) to having a high molecular weight by cross-linking so that a composition

^{*}Should be "Kaneda"

having excellent best resistance". At least it can be said that in Kaneda realization of the characteristic feature or result of the present invention mentioned above is not ever intended.

Regarding the Nakashiwa and Kawakubo references, each is concerned only with powder Slush molding technology. Each reference, otherwise, has no real relevance to the present invention.

Under the circumstances as mentioned above, Goetz's invention, Kaneda's invention and any combinations of those inventions would not suggest the present invention and cannot attain the object of the present invention. Additionally, the results as disclosed in the specification of the present invention (see page 98 Table 1, page 99 Table 2) are distinguishable and unexpectable. Therefore, the present invention would be unobvious to a skilled artisan based on the cited references.

Respectfully submitted,

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